

Anti-Slavery 5.

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MORE EXPOSURES.

BY THE
AUTHOR OF THE FORMER SPECIMEN.

"To remain silent would further be to leave the public a prey to the speculations of many advocates in a bad cause, who, aware of the importance of an impression once given, scruple not to assert that which they know to be wrong, and expect to see disproved; calculating, nevertheless, on its certain effect with the many, to whom the correction of the mis-statement may never find its way."

See "EXPOSURE OF ARGUMENTS," p. 2.

THE rivalry which has been manifested to show the correctness of the above quotation forbids its author's abandoning to the deceptions it points at, those whom the artifice it reprobates is meant to mislead. Calculating, as is above intimated, on their mis-statements having made the intended impression upon some who may never meet with the exposure of their fallacies, the writers of them probably would not have been deterred from the exercise of their cunning, even if they had foreseen the disgrace that awaits them. To have succeeded with a few is compensation enough for them, so desperate is the predicament in which they stand; but silence, under such circumstances, would ill become one who has observed, that at such a time "to remain silent would be to abandon the public a prey to the unallowable practices of such misleading pilots."

There are hearers on public occasions who never venture to form an opinion of what they hear, until they are assisted by the unhesitating declaration of others, who may be as little capable of judging as themselves. Readers also of the same description are frequently met with; and it is not unusual for those who affect to be never without an opinion, but who in reality only circulate as their own the sentiments of some friendly reporter, who himself may have picked it up at a third or fourth hand, a most confident assurance that the "Exposure of Arguments" has been unmercifully bemauled by "The CENSOR," on one hand, and by "A COLONIST," on the other; besides bespatterings, of no ordinary severity, from themselves in disguise, and from inferior satellites of those literary meteors. The following pages will show what sort of mice these mountains in labour have brought forth.

The evidence of a reluctant witness is of tenfold weight, when it tends to prove the facts in dispute, even against his evident anxiety to counteract such an impression; and it is thus that the CENSOR manifests the approbation due to the "Exposure of Arguments," &c. Opposing to that pamphlet an article in the preceding number of his own work, he bears witness to there being, "in the compass of a page, more said to the purpose, than in the thirty-eight pages of the 'Exposure.'" The importance thus attached to the page in question will be a sufficient apology for extracting it, and placing against its several parts the numbers of such pages of the "Exposure" as maintain and illustrate the very same points, with the greatest possible earnestness.

This justly distinguished page tells us, No. XVI. p. 140. that "more than one half the slaves are the victims of treachery, cruelty, and degrading oppression."

To which are added, expressions of hope, and prayers for negro emancipation.

"I trust the people will continue to load the table of the British Parliament with petitions."

"The planters are rushing to their own destruction."

"If they wish indemnification, let them have it."

"The vast majority of them are against a change of the present state of things, on any conditions."

"The great West India proprietors are gentlemen," &c.

"It is the petty proprietors, the residents in the West Indies, who have in general risen from low and insignificant situations, who have been long accustomed to lord it over their fellow creatures;—men, whose minds, from long habits of command, are deeply imbued with false pride and arrogance: it is those who howl and bellow in their nutshells of assemblies, send their fulminations against Britain, and oppose emancipation, be-

Which see asserted and illustrated in the "Exposure," pages 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 21, 26, 27.

As enforced throughout the "Exposure," from beginning to end.

The great object which the "Exposure" has in view.

See "Exposure," pages 18, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 30.

See "Exposure," pages 17, 35.

See "Exposure," page 35. where the same fact is asserted, accounted for, and duly execrated.

See "Exposure," pages 24, 27, 32, 34, 35.

See "Exposure," pages 10, 12, 13, 19, 20, 22, 24, 27, 28, 32, 34, 35.

cause it would at once sweep away their long-possessed power and fondly-cherished superiority."

On the idea of the Colonies separating from England, it is said, "What will Britain lose by that? She will be a gainer."

"Let Britain withdraw her governors, their suites, and her soldiers, and emancipation will soon follow, though not in the manner that all humane men would wish."

"Let Britain withdraw her soldiers, and in a few years St. Domingo will not be the only republic of blacks in the West India Islands."

"I am certain that no one who has lived twelve months in the West Indies will oppose emancipation, but we should never take the opinion of those who have lived there for three years, or longer; for by that time they have acquired the manners of the place—they have been accustomed to consider their slaves as beings of an inferior order—they have been filled with that self-consequence so easy to be observed in all persons who return from warm climates, where poor negroes perform the most menial offices, and are treated like the beasts of the field; and in none so much as in West India planters."

"But, notwithstanding the opposition of such persons, this great end, for which some of our wisest and ablest legislators have been long labouring, must succeed. The British parliament will not, for many mere sessions, allow itself to be insulted, or allow the mistaken interests of a few proud, prejudiced, and headstrong men, to prevent their wiping out the greatest stain on the nation."

Corroborated by the "Exposure," pages 22, 25, 26.

See "Exposure," pages 22, 23, 24, 25, 26.

See "Exposure," page 25.

The now settled question of "calious and case-hardened," as argued page 4, bottom of page 9, pages 10, 11, 12, 13, bottom of page 20, and page 31.

See "Exposure," page 34.

Thus it will be seen, in more than fifty instances, that the "Exposure of Arguments" is in the most perfect unison with those impressions, on the subject of Anti-Slavery, which the Censor himself pronounces to be entitled to universal adoption.

The more flighty and less connected effusions of his brain do indeed indicate considerable tergiversation, but would it be too much to hope that, habitually, he may be a friend to truth, and that the sinister motive (of whatever description) which on this occasion would have led him into error, was so counteracted by a better impulse, as to make the misguided scale kick the beam.

To the foregoing obligations the Censor has added one more, in the opportunity he affords for correcting an unobserved inaccuracy in the "Exposure of Arguments;" a reference having inadvertently been suffered to remain in page 24, to a preceding quotation, after that quotation was cancelled. But these are kindnesses of very inferior degree indeed, when compared with the unequivocal sanction bestowed upon the pamphlet by the further testimony he gives to its claim upon the attention and approbation of the public. This he evinces, by first showing a bitter determination to make it the subject of all possible condemnation, and then leaving as unassailable every point of the least importance that it contends for, not only uncontroverted, but their refutation unattempted. They consist,

1st. Of a charge of unprovoked and unjustifiable attacks, by two writers, whose communications appeared in the *Aberdeen Journal* of the 13th and 20th July; which, on the part of the writer so attacked, made vindication necessary.

2d. The denied authenticity and correctness of the account of "the Shooting Excursion," inserted in that paper 29th June.

3d. The existence, operation, cause, and effects of the alleged "epidemical delusion;" and the deduction, that to it is mainly to be ascribed the callous and case-hardened conduct of those who are unconsciously under its influence.

4th. The unfounded nature of the calumny which would attach to the negro character an incapability of unforced labour, and unfitness for the blessings of freedom.

5th. The murderous effects of the cruel treatment of the slaves, as evidenced by such a decrease in the black population of our West India Islands, as is unparalleled in any other part of the world.

6th. The utter uselessness of the Colonies to Great Britain, and the beneficial results the empire would derive from being totally separated from them.

7th. The awful catastrophe to be dreaded by the planters, if they still persist in the maintenance of the system, which these efforts are humanely calculated to rescue them from.

8th. The murderous and blasphemous quality of the plea slave owners urge in their defence, and the ground on which they insist on the legality of the murders they commit, and their right to persevere in them unmolested.

With the exception of one or two very brief and unsupport-

ed suggestions, at variance with established and undisputed truths, the entire fabric of the "Exposure," &c. consisting mainly of the several subjects here enumerated, remains not only unshaken, but unattacked.

Some readers, not so easily satisfied as others, may perhaps require to be told, if the general bearing of the Censor's criticism is so favourable, and yet that he assumes the attitude of hostility, to what parts are his attacks directed? The answer is, that the main objects of his acrimony are, 1st. The alleged *delusion*, by which the planters, &c. are disqualified to judge rightly on any thing relating to the question of emancipation; and, 2dly, *The Dromilly Shooting Excursion*. The copious exhibition of facts and arguments which incontestably demonstrate the first, he passes over, without attempting in any way to invalidate its truths, to enfeeble its assumptions, or to controvert its conclusions; and his great quarrel with the second is, not on account of any mis-statement it contains, not on account of any misapplication of its facts to the points they are made to bear upon; but because it is kept so constantly in view—because "the changes are rung on it, in every direction"—because "it is the author's food, drink, and sleep"—because "it is illustration and proof, first and last"—because the author "can never get rid of it"—because "it haunts him like an evil genius, and he wishes to terrify the public with its ghost."

It is not unusual to meet with heavy censures on writers, for *losing sight* of what they profess to deem their chief object; but the vitiated appetite of a critic must be sadly at a loss for food, when his severities have no better foundation than a writer's undeviating devotion to the keeping his principal theme in constant view.

He insinuates that the writer of the letters in the *Aberdeen Journal*, signed A.S. was the insulter, and not the party provoked; but the falsehood of that insinuation is recorded in that uncalled for and scurrilous attack which the Censor's partizan signed his name to, and which appeared in the *Aberdeen Journal* 20th last July.

With the same effrontery, and the same disregard of truth, he charges A.S. with advocating principles which justify murder and rebellion, whilst the entire and the obvious tendency of his arguments on that head are to warn against such consequences those whose unchecked career endangers their becoming the victims of such a result. He gives a blasphemous quotation, line 6. page 159. and adds to it an interrogatory which reminds one of the exclamations of a convicted criminal, who questions the authority by which he is condemned; and it partakes of the same spirit which, not long since, impelled a convict, at the conclusion of his sentence, to throw an ink-stand at the head of the judge.

The attempt to insinuate a meditated piracy of a passage, where, though the author is not named, *the passage is marked as a quotation*, is not unworthy of one whose obvious prejudices against the object which he affects to befriend, disable him from seeing, in those quotations, any thing beyond what *he* deems "only endurable;" though other observers, both supporters and opponents of the cause they plead, are prompt in the admiration of the talent they evince, and the *honest* warmth with which that talent is exerted.

The interesting and impressive summary, or circular, put forth by the Aberdeen Anti-Slavery Society, on its formation last March, is one of many respected authorities which particularly recommend the diffusion of information on the afflicting subject, and advise distinct expressions of public opinion, thereby to strengthen the hands and second the movements of Government, for promoting the benevolent object in view. It is to an impulse thus created that the writer's efforts are to be ascribed, and not to any over-rating of talents and acquirements, confessedly inadequate to the occasion, and unworthy of the cause. Conscious of his inability to maintain a literary warfare, his aim and the utmost extent of his intention was, in a subordinate capacity, to aid the more effectual exertions of others. It is brute force which impels him beyond that humble station. Whilst doing his best, with very humble pretensions, in such a way as this, he sees nothing to envy in the consequential strut of the higher gifted, who come forward at the eleventh hour, confessing, "we have been too backward in joining the many petitions which have been presented to the legislature for the abolition of that detestable bondage in which so many of our brethren of mankind are held." "We trust that the period of our supineness is ended," &c. With the generality of people, the ordinary pursuits of life admit not of their turning aside to co-operate in such a way for aiding a great public cause, however anxious for its success; but that is not the case with all; and to such as can conveniently contribute some portion of time, and are willing to exert such talents as they happen to possess, a distinct signal was given, that the time was come for them to bestir themselves; and it is not by such critics as the Censor that the writer of these pages can be deprived of his reward.

If we are to measure the sincerity of his confession by the standard of his consistency, it will not be very highly rated; since the main, indeed the only object in view, was to promote the cause of humanity, by exciting in the public an extensive and simultaneous movement in the way of preparing a petition to Parliament. And how does this professing repentant prove the honesty of the part he takes in that task? Why, by exerting all his faculties to cripple and crush the endeavours of the less

tardy ; the treachery of which conduct he involuntarily proves upon himself, by a thoughtless reference to the contents of *that page* in his preceding number, which a better influence caused him to insert, and impelled him on the present occasion to call into court, and to become the main evidence to his own conviction.

To think of diverting from its fell purpose the mighty mind which this drawcansir of a critic displays in the maledictory denunciation which closes his farcical farrago, would no doubt be as hopeless as, in their day, to have attempted the abrogation of a law of the Medes and Persians ; but, before the astounding and annihilating plunge takes place, the hapless victim assures himself that some portion of the Censor's coming pages will be devoted to a disproof of the facts, and a refutation of the arguments herein enumerated, and which seem, from his merely hissing and turning away, to be to him as the file was to the viper.

On turning aside from the Censor to the COLONIST, we recognize a former correspondent ; under another name indeed ; and better suited to the occasion than was the justly respected signature to his former favour ; but that does not enable us to account for the unreasonableness of his expecting any attention to his new matter, until he shall first of all have duly noticed the several observations which grew out of, and were rendered necessary by his first epistle. If, like the Censor, he found them to be unanswerable, and for that reason, preferred putting forward a puzzle in the shape of an advertisement, which no one could make head or tail of ; and, if like the ostrich, he seeks to shun danger by shutting his eyes to it, and courting the security of a dark corner, there is no more to be said, except it be, that until he shall have properly answered, or manfully admits to be unanswerable, that which has lain before him so many weeks, any subsequent productions of the same pen, whether more or less irrelevant, deceptious and scurrilous, have no *claim* to notice, however it may suit the purpose of a reader, to bring forward a particular passage or two, in order still farther to expose misrepresentation, or to check any such expectation on the part of an individual, as may point at self gratification, which can only be obtained at the expense of those it is every man's duty to protect from such annoyances. Of the first description, is that wherein is pronounced as " shocking to humanity--inconsistent with the character of a " Christian, and disgraceful even to that of a man," an application of the most benevolent exertion, grounded on a vital principle of Christianity, to the rescuing slaves from bondage, and preserving their owners from massacre. " Wishing, (as has been well expressed), no one to be unjustly deprived of his property, far less to be injured in his person ; abhorring insurrections, massacres, and retaliation, and therefore warning slave-owners, that

"it rests with themselves to avert those calamities." The other passage not to be parsed over, emanates from a kindred spirit to that which (either as a demon or a deity infernal) actuated the "Censor," as depicted page 7. The intimidating principle, so craftily resorted to by "A Colonist," to keep from the appointed meeting its most interesting associates, is a *ruse* which will assuredly fail of its intended effect, because, if *he* does not know, *they* do, that the tone of feeling, on such occasions *here*, is too refined, and too decided, not to crush in an instant, so unmanly an impertinence.

A man's calling about him, as a Colonist does, for more *facts* and *arguments*, whilst he has before him, yet undisposed of, such a catalogue as is herein enumerated, (see page 4), looks as if he really had not a right comprehension of the meaning of those words. To assist him in overcoming that difficulty, it may not be amiss to point out some instances of both. It is equally a *fact*, to say, that William Tell was a friend to *freedom*, and that "A Colonist" is a friend to *slavery*; that to the former, nothing was so dear as a system of *liberty*, and that to the latter, a system of *interminable bondage*, is not less so. It is a well confirmed *fact* to assert, that at the Dromilly shooting excursion, human beings were butchered in cold blood, without their murderers being made answerable to any human law for such an act, and without incurring any disapprobation on the part of their fellow-colonists, for such homicides; and it is a *fact* equally clear, that "A Colonist" is a decided and a professed friend to the system which tolerates such atrocities, and a decided enemy to the means proposed for a termination of them, although amply guaranteed against all injury. Another *fact*, unsuspected till the appearance of "A Colonist" in the *Aberdeen Journal* of the 14th ultimo, is, that he contemplates the liberty of the press, with the same enmity he does that of the person, unconscious one would imagine, that the subject which he is offended to find discussed in a periodical print, is of all others, that particular subject, the discussion of which, through the aid of the press, and particularly the periodical press, has procured for these countries, their best blessings,—blessings, enjoyed by no other country upon earth, *because* other countries are, as "A Colonist" would have us, destitute of a free press—blessings of which we are now on the eve of making 800,000 fellow-men partakers; to whom "A Colonist" would continue the curse of perpetual slavery. "A Colonist" has been too well trained not to know that there are such things as *false facts*, and, in some assumptions of his, to which he would attach the qualities of a *fact*, falsehood, and nothing but falsehood is to be found:—such for instance, (in imitation of the Censor), as asserting an assailant to be the party assailed; and (far eclipsing his rival) complaining of unmerited attacks upon his own private character, whilst his

being on this occasion the aggressor, is proved by the signature of his own name to *that fact*, in the *Aberdeen Journal* of the 20th July; and whilst proofs of the utmost respect for his private character, and still more of an unreserved admission of his individual kindness as a slave-owner, has been manifested from the commencement of the contest to the present moment. It pervades the pamphlet in question throughout, wherever it could be introduced; and the manifestation of a similar spirit is most creditable to the liberality of the (to the writer of this perfectly unknown) composer of the circular or summary of the Aberdeen Anti-slavery Society, to be found in the upper part of its 2d page. So much for *FACTS*. As for *arguments*, "A Colonist" need not go far for a specimen, having himself met with a puzzling plurality of them in the "Exposure of Arguments," and had he not found them completely unanswerable, would have enabled him to produce something a little more to the purpose, than the notable advertisement of an "Appendix," which, after all, he could not venture to produce. In case his nerves should be equal to another perusal of the said herein-enumerated, *but still unanswered*, facts and arguments, he is called upon to pay particular attention to those which have for ever set at rest the question, "*Whether the hearts of colonists, generally, are or are not rendered callous and case-hardened, in respect to their negro population, by long familiarity with acts of cruelty and oppression; and whether such familiarity has or has not a tendency to beget in the human mind, a species of epidemical delusion, of which the parties are altogether unconscious?*" Let not this return to what may be deemed an already exhausted subject be ascribed to a pertinacious motive. It results from such subsequent reflections on what the former pamphlet urged thereon, as not only affords a decided assurance of its correctness, but fully authorises the urging still farther, that to entertain any doubt about the proneness of man to abandon himself, *under such circumstances*, to the delusion contended for, would be to display a complete ignorance of the principal effect wrought upon our common nature, by the transgression of him from whom we are all descended.

Thus finally terminating (on one side at least), a disputation which was rendered necessary in order to shield *the cause* from ill effects it might otherwise have sustained from erroneous conclusions respecting its advocate, the appointment of a day for the intended General Meeting, will be made a ground for some farther observations thereon.

The extraordinary efforts made of late to draw the attention of the public to the subject of these pages has no doubt induced many persons to make themselves acquainted with the merits of the case, who, before knew very little concerning it; but whilst on the side of emancipation the communications of the press have

been most voluminous, and at the same time most convincing, the productions of their opponents seem to have embraced every object but that which one would expect to find them most intent upon, namely, the showing *why* they are so averse to a reform; for the propriety of which, such cogent reasons are advanced on the other side. Though the beneficial effects of converting slaves into free labourers, as confirmed and established by the experience of planters in the Spanish and Portuguese Settlements, might well be referred to as evidences of the safety, and the advantages attendant on the practice; still, as it sometimes happens, that measures which succeed greatly in one situation, do, from unforeseen impediments to success, fail in others, it was not too much for them to withhold their concurrence in so radical a change of system, until they should be enabled to calculate, in case of failure, on having indemnification within their reach. That ground of hesitation has however been completely overcome nearly three years, but no abatement of their opposition has followed. It was in the month of May, 1823, that Mr. Canning, in the House of Commons, unequivocally stated that the question was, "how civil rights, moral improvement, and general happiness are to be communicated to so over-powering a multitude of slaves, with safety to the lives and security to the interests of the white population, our fellow-subjects and fellow-citizens?" To this stipulation, the House stands pledged by unanimously *RESOLVING*, that a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of all parties concerned should be attended to in the accomplishment of the emancipation proposed. We thus perceive that their assurance is rendered doubly sure, but still they are as unbending in their resistance, as they were before this guarantee was afforded them; and instead of rationally accounting for such a conduct, their policy is to direct the public attention to things they have no right to interfere with—such as the erroneous principles upon which the Sierra Leone Settlement is established; the endeavours of East India speculators to rival them in the European Sugar Market; the perseverance of those who oppose slavery upon religious grounds, and various other matters which, however, they, as sugar-planters and owners, feel sore at, they have no more right to object to than any tradesman, merchant, or manufacturer, has to complain of the rivals that are every day starting for a share of benefits which others in the same line are enjoying. Each is doing his duty to himself, and to those who are dependant upon him; and the man who opposes slavery on religious grounds, is as much entitled to do it, as a protestant is in opposing the errors of popery. Another cause of great offence with them is the *way* in which the enemies to slavery are proceeding; the *way* in which petitions are got up, ready prepared, sent through the country, and forced upon the public attention, with as much earnestness, as a travelling tradesman solicits orders.

If the parties pointed at consider themselves as doing what is

right, the more earnest they are in their endeavours, the more it is to their credit. The time which planters and their friends so improperly devote to making such proceedings matter of complaint; would be much better employed in making known *what* is the ground or pretence for the continued inveterate opposition to the cause; protected as they now are from all risk of injury to their property; and with a very fair prospect of experiencing by their compliance, as the Spanish and Portuguese Colonists have done, very essential advantages. The utter want of information on this head has been a source of great perplexity, for though one way of accounting for it may be found in the preceding lines of italics, in page 9, it does not follow that *all* the advocates for slavery are in so humiliating a state, and for those who are not, there appeared a total want of means to account for their maintaining the resistance they do, *circumstanced as they now are*. Whilst oppressed with this difficulty, some light seems to be thrown upon the subject by the re-publication of an article on the subject, of which its partizans thought so highly, as to put it before the public in a way more favourable to an *extensive* perusal; than it experienced on its original appearance. The general contents of the article are herein passed by, as not immediately applicable to the point in view. It was addressed to the inhabitants of a town in the north of England, at a time (last year), when they were preparing, as we are now, to hold a General Meeting, to consider of a petition to Parliament.

Considerable stress is therein laid upon Mr. Wilberforce's observation that "the sin of slavery is obviously a national one, and the expiation ought to be national also." Having, as it were triumphantly, proclaimed this admission of Mr. Wilberforce's as an authority which entitled Colonists to indemnification, its author takes no notice of the guarantee given by the House of Commons, but leaves his readers under an impression that the justice which *even Mr. Wilberforce* conceded, had been withheld from them. That so solemn a pledge as is embodied in the before mentioned resolution of a British House of Commons, should be held to be nothing worth, is so utterly inadmissible, that the mind becomes anxiously devoted to the finding out to what strange conclusion so strange a commencement was intended to conduct us. The following paragraph will assist us under the difficulty.

It follows immediately after the above quotation, viz.:—That "the sin of slavery is obviously a national one, and the expiation ought to be national also."

"Some pretend to grant the justice of this mode of reasoning, but at the same time say, let us do the deed, and, if afterwards you can make out a case of private injury sustained by it, you shall be heard. Pardon me, my good Sierra Leone friend, this ought not to satisfy me, or any one. It is not done in any other case, and if it be denied in *this*, it can be for no other rea-

“son than the *magnitude of the injury which is meditated*. Look
 “at the conduct of Parliament upon every occasion where a new
 “act is proposed, or an alteration in an old one. However ap-
 “parent the benefit to the public may be, there is an anxiety on
 “the part of government, and a jealousy on the part of indivi-
 “duals, that ample compensation shall be granted where private
 “injury is sustained. This compensation is always settled and
 “arranged *before the injury is done*; especially where the injury
 “is direct and palpable. An Englishman does not like to have
 “his house knocked about his ears in the first instance, in order
 “to widen or beautify a street, and to be told at the same time,
 “that if he feels himself injured he may make out a case, and
 “trust to the public faith for redress. Yet this is wanted of you
 “on the present occasion, and it is for this you are called to-
 “gether.”

Here the mystery is solved. As in a case which occupies a good deal of stammering and stuttering and humming and hawing, from the shame that is felt and the consequent reluctance to speak out; so here we have no want of circumlocution and materials for inference, with a guarded avoidance of the plain English whereby we should get at once at what the writer means. His ambiguities amount to this,—that having by mismanagement so essentially despoiled their property, as to be unable to carry on their concerns at all, without a yearly supply of a million and a half sterling, to which all the people of England, Scotland, and Ireland, are made to contribute; having been idle spectators of the security and advantages which the Spanish and Portuguese Colonists have obtained by making their slaves free, whilst the want of that blessing among their own bondsmen, exposes British planters to the dread of insurrections and massacre; they find themselves in possession of a property the most degrading and the most dangerous to the holder, and foresee the unrestrainable progress of new rivals in their trade, which cannot fail to render their present situation distressing in the extreme, and their prospects infinitely more so; that although the guarantee of the British House of Commons leaves them without pretence for resisting any longer the manumission which it had been well for them to have effected twenty years ago, it remained to be seen if by “a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull altogether,” they might not be able to make their opposition, (though destitute of any reasonable plea for opposing) so annoying, and its interruption to the impatience of reformers so galling, as to enable them to get rid of their bankrupt concern altogether, by a transfer of their interest; looking, no doubt, to the facility with which a Board of Commissioners might be appointed to take charge of it; and the equal facility with which a finance committee could arrange the mode of liquidation. In their own willingness to treat upon any terms, and to sell at almost any price, they might not

unreasonably calculate on the accomplishment of such an object, if they could but make their refractory conduct a means of advancing such a project a single step.

A consciousness of its untenable qualities is manifested throughout the commencement of their plea. The claim is avowedly grounded on assumptions which are not capable of being maintained. The conclusions are made to spring from premises, which are notoriously false. The first assumption is that the measure proposed will be *injurious* to the Colonists, which, for reasons above stated, is in direct opposition to the evidence of experience, wherever similar measures have been adopted. It says, with reference to the practice of Parliament in similar cases, (still assuming that the new system will be *injurious* to the property) that "compensation is always settled and arranged *before the injury is done*, especially where the injury is direct and palpable." Without dwelling on the direct and palpable miscolouring of this suggestion, it is sufficient to state that the entire records of Parliament would not afford a more prompt evidence of its devotion to any object, than the House of Commons did to that of securing to the colonists, the indemnification in question, by its resolution of the 15th May, 1828. Admitting for a moment, so unlikely a thing as that the emancipation intended might prove injurious, even in the contemplation of that improbable result, on *what* pretence, it may be asked, can it be insinuated that in this case compensation is *not* "settled and arranged?" Is there no meaning in, no dependence to be placed upon a resolution of the British House of Commons? The English law does *not* leave it in the will of a refractory individual to keep his house standing, if he is so destitute of English feeling, as to make it an obstacle to the accomplishment of a public good; but, without putting into his hands a sum of money equal to the value of his property, *before determining upon the measure*, he is not even *communicated with* upon it; he is, as an inevitable consequence, in a situation to complain, and the law is as ready to redress him, as he to claim redress. Equally so has the government and the legislature manifested its readiness to redress the planters, in case they should have any claim to redress. The absurdity of their argument is upon a par with the falsehood of the assumption on which it rests, and in every sentence of the disclosure, the advocate betrays a consciousness of the impossibility of giving to a case, composed of such materials, any of the plausibility which is necessary to interest our sympathy, or of the truth which is essential to the concurrence of our reason. The circumstances connected with the pressing upon the public attention the article where the above paragraph is extracted, are such as show it to be of no common estimation with the colonial party. The vehicle chosen for its republication, is the London *John Bull*, (of the 18th Dec.), a paper notoriously devoted to their cause. It is introduced

to notice by a gentleman of no ordinary rank in society ; and its weight augmented by that gentleman's authorising the production of his introductory letter, with his name and address. He tells us he is the owner of a thousand slaves, and if *his* reluctance should result from a deep-rooted anxiety to perpetuate the privileges of the white skin, let us only figure to ourselves how much *his* sovereignty over so many fellow-creatures exceeds that of George the Fourth over any one of his hundred millions of subjects, considering at the same time, man's natural proneness to abuse as well as to use the power he possesses, and to see in the abuse as well as the exercise, a source of enjoyment peculiar to the station he occupies ; we shall then be at no loss to account for the deplorable effects produced by such a combination of causes. We thus become acquainted with *two* ways of accounting for the opposition given to the termination of slavery, in the British dominions, neither of which are the parties inclined to sanction by an open and unqualified avowal. Unless they can state some other, hitherto concealed, motives, for the resistance they maintain, the public can come to no other conclusion than that they are influenced by one or other of these two inducements ; and the little respect to which either or both of them are entitled, it would be very superfluous to point out. It has been already observed, that the simple object of emancipation, on the mere merits of substituting freedom for slavery, forms of itself sufficient ground to act upon, without seeking for additional aggravations in the alleged ill-treatment of the slaves. Nothing can be more true. It, at the same time, is not thence to be inferred, that notorious and confirmed as the cruelties now are, they should be disregarded. On the contrary, it is incumbent on us to avail ourselves of the stimulus they constitute to impel us to a more animated exertion, for abridging the period of their sufferings as much as is consistent with "the well-being of the slaves, the safety of the colonists, and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of all parties concerned therein." It, of course, will be the business of Parliament to arrange these matters in detail ; but it is the duty of petitioners to urge for their more particular attention such points as appear to claim particular regard.

Before finally closing these observations respecting petitions to Parliament, it may not be improper to remark upon a curious conceit of those enemies to the Anti-Slavery cause, who treat, with no small levity, what they call the *attempt* to prove by the numerous petitions that the people are in favour of the proposed reform. Without so unnecessary a waste of time as would be chargeable on demonstrating so obvious a truth as that the *attempt* is eminently successful, there is no passing by in silence their presumption that entire communities are influenced to address the legislature on a subject to which they are reconciled only, not

by the real merits of the case, but by the artifices and management of a set of tricksters sprinkled on the face of the country, to seduce the people into a conduct they would otherwise be averse to. Now, it so happens, that we have among ourselves a no very inadequate instance of the little effect produced by any, or by all the artifices that can be tried to make those who ought to judge for themselves, surrender their powers of deciding to the dictates of others. We have been debating and disputing and harassing each other in every possible way, from the introduction of the subject to our attention ten months ago; we even yet reserve to ourselves the independence of unsettled opinion, and many of us probably shall do so till the General Meeting takes place. We have actually written ourselves out of the newspapers, and are obliged to resort to other means for the purpose of putting forth a few last words. Another point to be noticed is the effrontery of trying to persuade those who have not yet petitioned, that by making themselves parties to the views of individuals who are bent upon the ruin and destruction of the colonists, they are not only about to disturb the comforts and enjoyments of the most contented and the happiest people upon earth, (meaning the slaves), but they are resigning themselves as instruments to the making white appear black. That we are impressing Parliament with so absurd a persuasion as that lawgivers at the distance of so many thousand miles, who are obliged to act upon the deceptious reports of interested evidences, are better judges of what ought to be done, and what ought to be avoided, than the local authorities with every other advantage, besides that of witnessing on the spot, in their own persons, the reality or the falsehood of assertions as contradictory as light and darkness. Very specious indeed! but not at all affecting the simple question of slavery or no slavery, which, as far as the *opinion* of Parliament is concerned, has been decidedly settled by the House of Commons, nearly three years ago.

The cruelties of the *slave trade*, or forcible conveyance of negroes, from the coast of Africa to the West Indies, were as obstinately denied, as more recently have been those of the Colonial *system* of slavery there; but the accumulation of evidences to the truth of the alleged barbarities became irresistible in the former case, as it now is in the latter; and to the cause of humanity every thing gave way. Eighteen years of criminal misrepresentation on the one hand, and culpable credulity on the other, have since elapsed in respect to the *system*; but truth, which never fails ultimately to triumph, has dissipated the intellectual mist in which we have been enveloped; and the late official reports of the Fiscal of Berbice, printed by order of the House of Commons, and circulated throughout the empire, have confirmed the certainty, and the shocking extent to which the cruelties of the system are carried on, with a rigour surpassing all former representations, though, up to the present moment, they are denied by the

deluded and interested: just as formerly, the horrors of the slave trade were contradicted so long as there remained the remotest probability of thereby defeating the efforts of the humane. But the eyes of the people of the united kingdom are open;—they scarcely need now be told that

“Among the manifold evils to which man is liable, there is not one more extensively productive of wretchedness, than PERSONAL SLAVERY; that it inflicts on the unhappy subject of it almost every injury which law, even in its rudest state, was intended to prevent. Is property an object of solicitude? The slave, generally speaking, can neither acquire, nor securely enjoy it. Is exemption from personal wrong indispensable to comfort? The slave is liable to indignity and insult, to restraint and punishment, at the mere caprice of another. He may be harassed and rendered miserable, in a thousand ways, which so far from admitting of proof, that would be requisite to obtain legal redress, (even where any legal redress is ostensibly provided), can perhaps with difficulty be distinguished from such exercise of a master’s power as admits of no regulation or control. Even life itself, may, with impunity be wantonly sported with; it may be abridged by insufficient sustenance; it may be wasted by excessive labour; nay, it may be sacrificed by brutal violence, without any proportionate risk of adequate punishment. In short, the slave can have no security for property, comfort, or life, because he himself is not *his own*! he belongs to another, who, with or without the offer of a reason or pretence, can at once separate all from him, and him from all which gives value to existence.”

“From this source of slavery, flows every species of personal suffering and moral degradation, until its wretched victim is sunk almost to the level of the brute.”—“In the exultation produced by the victory over the *Slave Trade*, it was too readily believed, that the Colonial slavery, which had been fed by the trade, would undergo a gradual, but rapid mitigation, until it had ceased to reproach our free institutions, and our Christian profession; and was no longer known but as a foul blot in our past history. It was this hope, joined to a liberal confidence in the enlarged and benevolent purposes of the Colonial proprietary, which prevented the immediate prosecution of such further parliamentary measures as should have at once placed the unhappy slave under the protection of the law; and have prepared the way for his restoration to those sacred and inalienable rights of humanity, of which he had been unjustly dispossessed. But if, as is the fact, those hopes have proved illusory, and have only served to render the disappointment more bitter and mortifying; shall the friends of the African race be now reproached for waiting no longer, when the real ground of reproach is, that they should have waited so long! They place themselves then on the immovable ground of Christian principle, while they invoke the interference of Parliament to effect the immediate mitigation, with a view to the gradual and final extinction, in all parts of the British dominions, of a system which is at war with every principle of religion and morality, and outrages every benevolent feeling; assured that the same spirit of justice and humanity which has already achieved so signal a victory over the *Slave Trade*, will again display itself in all its energy, nor relax its efforts until it shall have consummated its triumphs.”

By accounts just arrived, we learn that our delay has already lost us the pre-eminent station of being the first among the nations to terminate slavery; and that GREAT Britain already has its rank in the rear of BRAZIL!—a people whose existence as an independent state is not yet one year old!!! Let us guard against being thrust still lower, when we ought to have stood highest.

Aberdeen, 11th January, 1826.